

Abstract

The present invention provides a new method for the prediction of, or diagnosis of, auto-immune diseases, thereby alerting the subject to the presence of, or propensity to develop, an auto-immune disease so that preventative or therapeutic regimens may be initiated or changed so as to treat, modulate or prevent expansion of the $CD4^{lo}CD40^{hi}$ T cell population responsible for the destructive inflammation. The invention also discloses agents which modulate, treat or prevent expansion of $CD4^{lo}CD40^{hi}$ T cells. In one embodiment, the method is predictive of type I diabetes.